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Manuel Ray Rivera

(HSCA # 009 005 memo to
G & R Bureau, tel 6/24/78
interview w/ Manolo
Ray Rivera from
FBI/goggy)

Ray was born in Cuba in 1924. Because of his outstanding performance as a Civil Engineer he was granted a scholarship in 1947 by the Cuban Ministry of Public Works to study at the University of Utah. Ray was in the U.S. for two years but did not complete his work for a Masters degree. (Ibid) He held various positions in the engineering field, one of which involved was Project Manager for the construction of the Havana Hilton Hotel. (Ibid) In May 1957 he organized the Civic Resistance Movement which supervised sabotage & acts of terrorism against the Batista regime. (Ibid) Fidel Castro appointed him Minister of Public Works in February 1959 (Ibid). In November 1959 he was arrested and relieved of his ^{official} position [FBI Correlation Study, Ray file, # 97-4546, Sec. 1, HSCA 005990, P 27] Ray deserted Castro because of his Communist connections (Ibid) He founded the Movimiento Revolucionario del Pueblo (MRP) in 1960, serving as its Chief with the following individuals completing the leadership: Raul Ceballos, Special Assistant to Ray; Juan Esteves Ramirez, Secretary; Ramon Bergman, Military Intelligence Matters; and Rogelio Cisneros, Chief of MRP in Cuba. (CIA/DOO Ray Vol II)

In the summer of 1960, Ray was being

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Agent - Another CIA officer, who met privately with Ray in Nov 1960, stated that his political posture was doubtful as far as U.S. Government acceptance is concerned. (CIA/DDO-Ray Vol II, Cable to Director from MASH, 11/17/60)

actively recruited by the CIA to become a member of the FRD, (CIA/DDO approaches being made through Raul Chedas. (CIA/DDO Ray Vol I) Ray's background was questioned by the State Department (CIA/DDO Ray Vol I memo to WH/4 Chief from Acting Chief, WH. 27 Sept 1960, Subject: State approval to include Manuel Ray Rivera into the FRD Complex) and by the Miami CIA office (CIA/DDO Ray VOL I, Cable from MASH to WH/9, Sept 29, 1960) but he was granted Provisional Operational Approval by the CIA on 25 Oct 1960 (CIA/DDO Ray Vol I - POA form). His personnel papers contain the following assessment: "Subject has definite political action potential, is a pro-democratic official of government who is not in sympathy with aims of international Communism and who is interested in strengthening ties between Cuba & U.S." (CIA/DDO Ray VOL I, (PRO Part 2) Sec. VI)

Not everyone in the CIA who had dealings with Ray were in agreement with this assessment. In a Memo for Record dated 11/21/60, it was reported that, "... Ray did not politically represent anything to cheer about." (CIA/DDO Ray Vol II, Memo for Record 11/21/60 Subj: Meeting with King and Ceterline on subject of handling MR.)^{Agent} Another later memo for Record states that Ray's actions all seemed directed toward making him the future

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power in Cuba rather than overthrowing Castro
(CIA/DDO Ray Vol II, Memo for Record, 2 June 1961,
Subj: Relations w/ Manolo Ray & the MRP from James A. Noe/J)
The memo further pointed out that it was
believed Ray was so far "left" in his thinking
that he would be as dangerous (or more so in the
long run) to U.S. interests as Castro, if he ever
got to be a power in Cuba. (Ibid) Ray
submitted a detailed study of a general program
to attain the liberation of Cuba whose general
thesis stated that the MRP believed the best way
to represent the aims of the Cuban people
is offered by the democratic left. (CIA/DDO
Ray Vol. VI, 9 June 1961, general program study)

Ray made his political position very
clear during a private meeting with ~~two~~ a
CIA Officer on Nov. 15, 1960 (CIA/DDO Ray Vol II,
Cable to Director from MASH) He said the MRP
did not wish to reinstate the 1940 Cuban
Constitution and that the Castro laws passed at
the beginning of his regime would be
promulgated. (Ibid) Ray ~~told~~ further ~~said~~
informed the CIA Officer that he believed
the state should regulate private investments
and utilities should be nationalized. (Ibid)
Charges of "Tidelismo without Tidel" were made
against Ray's MRP. (CIA/DDO Ray Vol II, Contact report
from Wallace A. Parlett, 10/17/60, Subj: Meeting w/ Juan Estoyan

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The CIA received ^{negative} information about Ray from prominent exile Cubans. Ray was described ^{by} one exile as highly dangerous because of his ambition to play a prominent role in the Cuban government after Castro's overthrow. (CIA/ODD Ray Vol II, Memo for Record - John D. Peters, 11/8/60, Subj: Contact report on meeting with Rogelio Gonzalez). Mrio Cardona was opposed to Ray, believing his program was too Marxist (CIA/ODD Ray, Vol III, Information Report from U.S. citizen, free-lance writer + part-time sugar broker, 12/22/60) and also said Ray was bitterly anti-American as well as probably totalitarian in his thinking. (CIA/ODD Ray Vol IV, Memo to S-^{Dr} Berle from ARA - ^{Philip W. Bonsal} March 16, 1961, Subj: Recent Cuban Developments)

Manuel Artime advised that the ~~MRP~~ Ray's group, MRP, was opposed to banning the Communist Party and in favor of "nationalizing everything." (CIA/ODD Ray Vol IV, Cable to Bell from JMWAVE, March 1, 1961)

Although aware of his controversial stands, Ray was actively recruited to join the FRD by the CIA. (CIA/ODD Ray Vol II, Cable to Director from MASH, 11/17/60) Ray was described as "a natural leader of highest intellect, deepest sincerity and conviction." by his recruiter (Ibid)

Ray received full operational approval as a political asset on 7 Feb. 1961 (CIA/ODD Ray Vol IV) and accepted appointment to the CRC on 27 March 1961 (CIA/ODD Ray Vol IV, Memo for Record, 27 Mar 1961, by Gerald Dioller, Subj: Ray Accepts appointment to Council --)

Ray recruited joining the CRC because he felt the members were too restrained and he did not want to become a part of a situation in which someone else was running the show for the exiles. (45CA # - Interview w/ Manolo Ray Rivas, 6/28/70)

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He has stated to HSCA investigators that certain influential & wealthy Americans, among them William Buckley, opposed him and a lot of heavy propaganda was being circulated accusing him of being communistic. (HSCA 70705, ^{6/28/78} by Tonge, Gonzales) (6/28/78 by Monolo Ray Roads)

memo D.G. Polt. Berry

Within a week, Ray met with a CIA officer and complained that Miro was backing away from his commitments & was not willing to give Ray any voice in the Council. (CIA/DOO Ray Vol V, Cable from ^{from} JM WAVE to Bell, Apr. ³, 1961) (6/28/78 by Monolo Ray Roads)

Ray withdrew from the CRC ^{shortly after the Bay of Pigs invasion} and requested the CIA to give him support independent of ~~the~~ that organization. (CIA/DOO Ray Vol. II, Memo for Record, 2 June 1961, Subj: Relations with Monolo Ray & the MRD, signed (James A. Noel))

In October of 1961, the Puerto Rican Planning Board announced that Ray had accepted a position as consultant to that Board & would be residing in P.R. (CIA/DOO Ray Vol. IV, Memo for Chief/W4 Division, 10 Oct 1961 to (Warren S. Younger), Subj: General - Cuban Matter; Specific - Manuel (Monolo) Ray) Ray was looked upon with great favor by the Puerto Rican government. (CIA/DOO Vol III, Cable dtd 2 July 1962 to Director from San Juan)

Manuel Ray became actively engaged in recruitment of Castro defectors in the summer of 1962. (CIA/DOO Ray Vol III, Cable dated 25 July 1962)

His efforts were directed toward the (Cuban Ambassador in Mexico) (CIA/DOO Ray Vol III, Cable to (Mexico City) fr. Director, 23 Aug 1962) ~~etc.~~ and ^{later} Cuban officials in Paris and Brussels (CIA/DOO Ray file Vol II Cable to Director (from Paris), 19 June 1962, # 77272). File review failed to ascertain if any of his endeavors were fruitful.

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In the two months preceding the assassination of JFK, Ray was travelling in Latin America -
Honduras ~~in October 1963~~ (CIA/DOO Ray Vol. XI - Field Info.
Report dtd 1 Oct 1963) & Costa Rica ~~in~~ in late Sept 1963
(CIA/DOO Ray Vol. XI Dispatch to Chief/WHD from (es/Panama)
dd 3 Oct 63), and Venezuela in October (CIA/DOO Ray Vol. XI,
Memo for Record 2 Oct 1963, fr. Alfonso Rodriguez) devoting
his full time to JURE (CIA/DOO Ray Vol. XI, Draft,
dd 4 Oct 63 by Rodriguez, Subj: Manuel Ray Rivero)
On Nov. 1, he met with a CIA agent ~~on~~ on
St. Thomas Island to discuss JURE plans to
begin operations inside Cuba by the end of
^{CIA/DOO Ray Vol. XI} December. (Memo for Record from Alfonso Rodriguez,
Subj: Meeting w/ Ray in St. Thomas, 31 Oct & ~~Nov~~ (Nov 1963))
JURE was to be involved in an infiltration
plan, known as Operation Bola, (CIA/DOO Ray Vol. XI, Cable
to JMWAVE fr. Director dd 3 Dec 1963) to commence when
the CIA cached materials for JURE on 25 Nov. (CIA/DOO
Ray Vol. XI, Cable to JMWAVE fr. Dir. 3 Dec 1963: 8 Nov 1963).
Ray told HSCA investigators that he was in Caracas
on Nov. 22, 1963 with Rogelio Cisneros and could not
recall the dates the CIA/JURE operation was to
have taken place. (HSCA # 009005, Interview w/ Manolo Ray
Rivero, 6/28/78 by Gonzi & Gonzales). The JURE
ship failed to pick up the cached materials on 25 Nov.
1963 and Ray ^{got the CIA} had no full explanation for ~~his~~ this
failure (CIA/DOO Ray Vol. XI, Memo for Record 13 Dec 1963,
from Alfonso Rodriguez)

In April of 1964, word was received by the WH division at the CIA that Ray had been closely associated with a known Puerto Rican Communist, ~~and~~ ^{he} was friendly with ^{the} Puerto Ricans who were working on the renovation of the White House & the group that tried to assassinate Truman.

(Note: Truman resided at Blair House during the renovation of the White House & assassination attempt was made at Blair House - date?)

(CIA/DDO, Ray - Assorted documents - Dispatch to Deputy Chief, WH/SA from Chief of Station, SMWAVE, dtd 14 Apr 1964 in Mexico, D.F.)
The source of this information was referred to by cryptonym and when HSCA researcher asked for the identity of the individual, ~~he~~ ^{in 1918} word was received that he was a "current asset" of the CIA so his identity could not be revealed. This information was disseminated to the Secret Service (HSCA 008290, Item 3 - Secret Service Administrative Profile, 3/27/75 on Manuel Ray Rivero, Case # CO2 3315, Subj. #00311) and the FBI (HSCA #006468, Item 5, p. 1, FBI # 97-4546, memo from (San Juan) (secret) dtd Oct 12, 1964. Re: JURE)

Ray's primary activities the first half of 1964 involved infiltration plans into Cuba and are discussed in the JURE section. The failure of the attempt brought Ray's prestige to a ~~low~~ near absolute low point among the Cuban exiles

(CIA/DDO Ray Vol XV, Cable to Director from SMWAVE, 6/10/64.)

In an effort to enable JURE to move its activities from U.S. territory, the CIA made a final payment

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To Rais group of \$75,000 for the period of 1 Oct - 31 Dec
1964. (CIA/DOO Ray Vol ~~XVII~~, Autonomous Operations -
Operating Plan.)